

IAP12 Rec'd PCT/PTO 16 JUN 2006

Re. Point V

**Reasoned statement with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statements**

1. The invention relates a method for reporting a malfunction of a faulty network node (independent claim 1) and to a corresponding network node (independent claim 6).

2. Prior art:

Document D1 (EP0959641), which discloses a system for protecting ATM connections, is seen as the closest prior art. A source node and a neighboring destination node are connected via at least two alternate lines. If the source node discovers a fault on the line, the source node sends an alarm message to the neighboring destination node so that the connection switches over to an alternate line.

3. Difference:

The object of the independent claims differs from the teaching of document D1 in that the alarm message is not only sent to one neighboring node, but, in accordance with the invention, a fault report of the faulty network node is sent by each operable network node to all directly adjacent network nodes.

3. Object:

The object to be achieved is seen as reducing the high outlay or implementation with alternate lines.

4. Solution:

In accordance with the features of the independent claims, each operable network node forwards a fault report of the faulty network node to all directly adjacent network nodes. In the event of a line failure, the fault report is also forwarded with the aid of the operable network node without a

direct parallel redundant line. In this way the message can reach its destination even in the event of fault if the direct line via a "diversion" via the operable network node.

There is no reference in the prior art, especially in D1, which would let the person skilled in the art implement a system in which each operable network node forwards a fault report of the faulty network node to all directly adjacent network nodes.

**Re. Point VII**

**Specific deficiencies of the international application**

1. The feature "Forwarding the fault report to all neighboring network nodes" is on the one hand included in the preamble (independent claim 1), on the other hand in the identified part (independent claim 6), whereby Rule 6.3. b) is not complied with.